

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ATHENS 00426 01 OF 03 161634Z
ACTION H-03

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USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 ATHENS 0426

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP,PEPR, GR, TU
SUBJ: VISIT TO ATHENS OF CODEL WILLIAMS/STEVENS

1. CODEL WILLIAMS/STEVENS ARRIVED IN ATHENS FROM TURKEY
AT 9 P.M. FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, AND DEPARTED AT 10 A.M.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, HALF A DAY EARLIER THAN PLANNED IN
ORDER TO RETURN TO U.S. TO ATTEND SENATOR HUMPHREY'S
FUNERAL. DURING ITS ONE FULL DAY IN ATHENS CODEL HAD
BRIEFING AND DISCUSSION WITH COUNTRY TEAM, MET FOR AN
HOUR AND 45 MINUTES WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, PAID
PROTOCOL CALL ON PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENT AND OTHER PARLIA-
MENTARIANS, MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRINCIPAL MFA OFFICIALS,
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 00426 01 OF 03 161634Z

WERE GUESTS AT BUFFET LUNCHEON HOSTED BY FOREIGN MINISTER
AND MRS.PAPALIGOURAS, PARTICIPATED IN BRIEF SIGHTSEEING
TOUR ARRANGED BY GOG, AND ATTENDED CHARGE'S RECEPTION
IN THEIR HONOR.

2. HIGHLIGHT OF VISIT TO ATHENS WAS, OF COURSE, MEETING
WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS IN WHICH ALL FIVE SENATORS,

FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE STAFFERS HOUSE AND KEANEY AND CHARGE PARTICIPATED. PAPALIGOURAS AND DIRECTOR OF PRIME MINISTER'S POLITICAL OFFICE AMBASSADOR MOLYVIATIS TOOK PART ON GREEK SIDE. CARAMANLIS BEGAN BY REAFFIRMING DEEP AND ENDURING GREEK FRIENDSHIP FOR U.S. DESPITE FRAYED RELATIONS IN RECENT YEARS WHICH STEMMED MAINLY FROM GREEKS' FEELING THEY HAD BEEN LET DOWN BY THEIR BEST FRIEND. GREEK FRIENDSHIP FOR THE U.S. IS STRENGTHENED BY GRATITUDE FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE SINCE TRUMAN DOCTRINE DAYS, THREE MILLION AMERICANS OF GREEK ANCESTRY, AND RECOGNITION OF THE COMMON IDEALS AND GOALS WE SHARE.

3. AFTER DESCRIBING IN DETAIL DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS SINCE HIS RETURN TO POWER, CARAMANLIS TURNED TO PROBLEMS IN FOREIGN RELATIONS. HE ADMITTED THAT THE "ORIGINAL SIN" OF PRESENT CYPRUS DIFFICULTIES WAS GREEK JUNTA'S ATTEMPT TO CREATE A NEW SITUATION TO WHICH TURKS FELT COMPELLED TO REACT. BUT DURING GENEVA CONFERENCE AFTER BOTH JUNTA AND SAMPSON HAD BEEN DEPOSED AND CARAMANLIS AND CLERIDES HAD REESTABLISHED LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENTS AND WERE TRYING TO REMEDY CONDITIONS WHICH HAD LED TO TURKISH INTERVENTION, TURKS STRUCK AGAIN WITH ATTLA INVASION, AND THIS WAS "NEW SIN" RESULTS OF WHICH WORLD IS FACING NOW. APPEALS TO NATO TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES WERE UNAVAILING AND ITS LEADERS ACTED AS IF THEY DIDN'T CARE. CHOICE FACING CARAMANLIS IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES WAS GOING CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 00426 01 OF 03 161634Z

TO WAR WITH TURKEY OR TAKING SOME OTHER ACTION TO MOLLIFY DOMESTIC ANGER AND FRUSTRATION. HE HAD CHOSEN LESSER EVIL OF WITHDRAWAL FROM MILITARY WING OF NATO AND COULD NOT NOW JUSTIFY A FULL RETURN UNTIL SITUATION WHICH CAUSED GREECE TO LEAVE IS SETTLED. IN THE MEANTIME, GREECE IS COMMITTED TO FULL SUPPORT OF NATO IN TIME OF WAR AGAINST A COMMUNIST COUNTRY, IS COOPERATING MORE FULLY IN NATO MANEUVERS, PLANNING, ETC., AND HAS PROPOSED INTERIM MEASURES TO MAKE EVENTUAL FULL REINTEGRATION EASIER. GOG HAS NOT SEEN MUCH EAGERNESS ON NATO'S PART TO FACILITATE GREECE'S RETURN, HE ADDED.

4. ASKED WHETHER A SETTLEMENT OF THE AEGEAN SITUATION AS WELL AS CYPRUS IS A PRECONDITION TO GREECE'S RETURN, CARAMANLIS SAID IT IS NOT, BUT GREECE PREFERS TO HAVE ITS AEGEAN DIFFERENCES WITH TURKEY SETTLED BEFORE REINTEGRATION SO AS NOT TO INJECT THOSE BILATERAL PROBLEMS MORE DIRECTLY INTO THE NATO FORUM.

5. GREECE AND GREEK CYPRIOTS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO BRING ABOUT A FAIR AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND HAVE IN FACT ACCEPTED ALL THE ELEMENTS WHICH TURKISH

SIDE SAYS ARE NECESSARY FOR A SETTLEMENT. NOW IT IS UP TO TURKS TO SAY WHAT THEY WANT AND TO MAKE CONCRETE PROPOSALS IN INTERCOMMUNAL NEGOTIATIONS UNDER AEGIS OF UN SECRETARY GENERAL. THE TWO MAINLAND COUNTRIES CAN ENCOURAGE AND PROD THEIR CYPRIOT COMPATRIOTS IN THESE TALKS BUT IT WOULD BE A BLATANT DENIAL OF CYPRIOT SOVEREIGNTY FOR GOG AND GOT TO SEEK A SOLUTION OVER THE HEADS OF CYPRIOT COMMUNITY.

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 00426 02 OF 03 161659Z
ACTION H-03

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 ATHENS 0426

LIMDIS

6. ON THE AEGEAN, CARAMANLIS SAID THAT ALTHOUGH IT IS TURKEY WHICH SEEKS TO CHANGE THE STATUS QUO, HE IS THE ONE WHO HAS MADE THE REAL EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT OF THE DIFFERENCES. UNFORTUNATELY, EACH TIME THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME PROGRESS, TURKEY BACKS OFF AND SETS NEW CONDITIONS. THIS APPARENT UNWILLINGNESS TO GET DOWN TO GOOD FAITH NEGOTIATIONS HAS MADE GREEK SIDE WARY OF BELIEVING TURKISH PROFESSIONS OF SINCERITY AND EXPRESSED DESIRE TO RESTORE GOOD RELATIONS.

7. SENATOR RIBICOFF REMARKED THAT AS A POLITICIAN OF 40 YEARS' EXPERIENCE HE SENSED THAT BOTH CARAMANLIS AND ECEVIT SINCERELY WANTED TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES, UNDERSTOOD
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 00426 02 OF 03 161659Z

THE NECESSITY OF DOING SO AND HAD THE NECESSARY WILL WILL AND STRENGTH. IN HIS VIEW THERE NOW EXISTED A NEW SITUATION WHICH OPENED THE WAY TO NEGOTIATING POSSIBILITIES WHICH MAY NOT HAVE EXISTED BEFORE. RIBICOFF READ FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM ECIVIT AND ASKED CARAMANLIS' COMMENTS ON IT:

"CERTAIN PROBLEMS WILL BE DIFFICULT TO SOLVE IF THE TWO PARTIES STAY OPPOSITE (SIC). BUT COOPERATION AT THE HIGHER LEVEL CAN ESTABLISH A PATTERN OF COOPERATION WHICH WILL LEAD TO SOLUTIONS. I HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR MR. CARAMANLIS. HE APPRECIATES THE VALUE OF ESTABLISHING FRIENDSHIP WITH TURKEY AND I, TOO, APPRECIATE THE VALUE OF SUCH FRIENDSHIP. IT MAY BE A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE AND COOPERATE. I HOPE HE WILL FIND IT POLITICALLY POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH THIS DIALOGUE."

8. CARAMANLIS COMMENTED THAT ALTHOUGH IT WAS DIFFICULT TO REPLY TO SUCH A MESSAGE ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT, HE RESPECTS ECIVIT AND IS PREPARED TO BELIEVE HE IS SINCERE IN WANTING TO SETTLE THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. BUT GREECE HAS HEARD HOPEFUL, SINCERE-SOUNDING WORDS FROM TURKISH SIDE BEFORE AND HAS BEEN DISAPPOINTED BY THE LACK OF FOLLOW-UP ACTION. TO ELEVATE THE COMPLEX PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE TWO COUNTRIES TO THE SUMMIT LEVEL AND THE GLARE OF PUBLICITY THAT WOULD ACCOMPANY SUCH A MEETING WITHOUT ADEQUATE PREPARATION WOULD RAISE POPULAR EXPECTATIONS AND EXPOSE BOTH GREECE AND TURKEY TO GREAT DANGERS IF THOSE EXPECTATIONS WERE NOT FULFILLED. THE SITUATION WOULD BE WORSENERED AND A NEW IMPASSE CREATED. PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS SHOULD BE MADE BY FOREIGN MINISTERS BEFORE ANY SUCH MEETING SO THAT THE GOG KNOWS AT LEAST APPROXIMATELY WHAT IT IS THAT RUEKEY WANTS.
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PAGE 03 ATHENS 00426 02 OF 03 161659Z

CARAMANLIS DECLARED THAT IF THESE PREPARATIONS ARE MADE AND HE IS CONVINCED THERE IS GOOD FAITH ON THE OTHER AISE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A REASONABLE SOLUTION, HE HAS BOTH THE COURAGE AND THE POWER TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT AND SEE THAT IT IS CARRIED OUT.

9. SENATOR RIBICOFF TOLD CARAMANLIS THAT ECEVIT, TOO, REALIZES THE POTENTIAL DANGERS OF UNPREPARED SUMMITRY AND WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE GROUNDWORK LAID BEFORE ANY MEETING AT THEIR LEVEL. WHAT IS NEEDED NOW IS A SHOW OF STATESMANSHIP ON BOTH SIDES TO LIFT THESE PROBLEMS OUT OF THE MORASS OF OBSTACLES AND SUSPICIONS WHICH HAVE PREVENTED THEIR SOLUTION TO A POLITICAL LEVEL WHERE THEY CAN BE EFFECTIVELY DEALT WITH.

10. SENATORS SAID THEY NOTED A FEELING IN TURKEY THAT GREECE IS DELAYING SIGNING ITS DCA WITH U.S. IN ORDER TO MAKE PASSAGE OF TURKISH DCA MORE DIFFICULT AND THUS PREVENT TURKEY FROM MODERNIZING ITS ARMED FORCES AND REGULARIZING ITS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. CARAMANLIS AVOIDED REPLYING DIRECTLY TO THIS CHARGE BUT EMPHASIZED THAT, UNLIKE TURKEY, GREECE HAS CONTINUED TO ALLOW U.S. FULL USE OF ITS MILITARY FACILITIES EVEN WITHOUT A DCA. AFTER RECALLING HISTORY OF DCA NEGOTIATIONS, PRIME MINISTER UNDERLINED THAT GREECE WOULD NOT INSIST ON A MILITARY ASSISTANCE PACKAGE IN CONNECTION WITH DCA IF TURKEY DID NOT RECEIVE THE ONE BILLION DOLLARS IT HAS BEEN PROMISED IN ITS DCA.

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 00426 03 OF 03 161705Z
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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 3 OF 3 ATHENS 0426

LIMDIS

11. SENATOR STEVENS ASKED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT FORTIFICATIONS ON GREEK ISLANDS NEAR TURKISH COAST AND NOTED THAT TURKS CLAIM THESE ARE IN VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, ILLEGALLY USE U.S.-SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT, AND THREATEN NEARBY TURKISH TERRITORY. IN RESPONSE, CARAMANLIS SAID IT WAS MANIFESTLY ABSURD FOR TURKEY TO CLAIM THESE DEFENSIVE FORTIFICATIONS THREATEN IT. TURKEY HAS THE LARGEST AMPHIBIOUS LANDING FLEET IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, HAS AN ARMY OF 100,000 DIRECTED NOT AGAINST SOVIETS BUT TOWARDS THE AEGEAN, AND HAS PUBLICLY DISPUTED GREECE'S CLAIM TO THESE ISLANDS. WHEN TURKEY SHOWED IN CYPRUS THAT IT HAD THE ABILITY TO CONDUCT AMPHIBIOUS INVASIONS, GOG TOOK THE ELEMENTAL PRECAUTION OF SENDING

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ATHENS 00426 03 OF 03 161705Z

STRICTLY DEFENSIVE WEAPONS TO SOME AEGEAN ISLANDS. THESE WEAPONS ARE OF SUCH A NATURE THAT THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY THEY COULD BE USED OFFENSIVELY AGAINST TURKS.

12. COMMENT: BASIC THRUST OF SENATORS' PRESENTATION BOTH TO CARAMANLIS AND LATER TO PAPALIGOURAS AND MFA OFFICIALS WAS THAT, AS PROVEN FRIENDS OF GREECE, THEY WERE CONCERNED AT LACK OF PROGRESS IN RESOLVING THESE ISSUES WHICH INVOLVE US ALL AND FELT THE TIME WAS RIPE TO MOVE BEYOND THE STALE AND UNPRODUCTIVE ARGUMENTS OF THE PAST. THEIR VISITS TO THE TWO COUNTRIES HAD CONVINCED THEM THAT TURKISH AND GREEK POSITIONS DO NOT DIFFER VERY MUCH FROM ONE ANOTHER AND THAT THERE NOW EXISTS A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR STATESMANSHIP BY MOVING AHEAD RAPIDLY. EMBASSY BELIEVES CODEL VISIT WAS USEFUL IN EXPOSING CARAMANLIS AND GOG LEADERS' TO DEPTH OF SENATORS' CONCERN OVER CONTINUING IMPASSE IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND THEIR VIEW THAT GREEKS SHOULD EXAMINE CAREFULLY WHAT ECEVIT HAS TO SAY AND NOT DISMISS IT OUT OF HAND BECAUSE OF SUSPICIONS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS OF PAST.

13. SENATE STAFFERS HOUSE AND KEARNY AGREED TO BRIEF DEPARTMENT ON CODEL'S EVALUATION OF TRIP AND WE RECOMMEND EUR/SE SEEK SUCH A BRIEFING.
MILLS

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